

# OIG: Arcadia clerk diverted check from vendor

Vickie Welborn, Louisiana 10:36 p.m. CDT August 27, 2014

*The inspector general's office was working with District Attorney Jonathan Stewart in the prosecution of another matter when the alleged misappropriation was discovered.*



(Photo: Bienville Parish Sheriff's Office )

ARCADIA – Former Arcadia clerk Theresa Burris altered a check made payable to a town vendor and diverted it into a banking account shared with her husband, a criminal investigator with the Louisiana Inspector General's office said in an arrest warrant.

Burris, 54, was arrested Tuesday on one count each of malfeasance in office and theft. She was booked into the Bienville Parish Jail and released on a \$20,000 bond. She resigned following her arrest.

The inspector general's office was working with District Attorney Jonathan Stewart in the prosecution of another matter when the alleged misappropriation was discovered.

"We are involved in two cases at their request," Inspector General Stephen Street said, explaining his office has the expertise in economic crime investigations and often are called upon in parishes that don't have specialized units.

According to the arrest warrant, state investigators found the altered check written from the town's water account. It was dated July 14, 2010 for \$2,830 and payable to Business Technology Group, a regular vendor.

Hand written next to BTG in the "pay to the order of" line was "c/o Theresa Burris."

The back was stamped "For Deposit Only Centric Federal Credit Union." What appears to be an account number was hand-written next to the stamp. Further investigation revealed the account number is controlled by Theresa and Keith Burris, the warrant states.

BTG submitted three invoices for payment in March 2010. Checks written for two were in sequential order. But the check that went into Burris' account did not appear on the ledger.

The credit union provided Burris' banking records in response to a subpoena. The records confirm the check for BGT was deposited into her personal account, along with two other checks, according to the arrest warrant signed by Tom Boulton, criminal investigator.

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